



King County

Department of Transportation

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Victor Obeso, Manager
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Dear Mr. Obeso:

Thank you for attending the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting of February 13 and discussing the Transit Now Partnership Criteria with us. In response to your presentation, we provide the following comments on the document.

Overall Comments

Reading as laypersons, TAC members felt that the document did not “flow” logically from point to point. To improve this aspect of the document, the TAC suggests providing examples or scenarios that illustrate the process in everyday terms and including these in each section (i.e., “Direct Financial Partnerships,” “Speed and Reliability Partnerships with Local Jurisdictions,” and so forth).

Direct Financial Partnerships (Page 1)

- During your presentation to the TAC, you explained that Metro will ramp up capacity (i.e., buses, drivers and infrastructure) over the next few years. The Transit Now Review Criteria does not speak to this capacity ramp-up period. How much capacity will be available each year, when will it be available, and how would this effect applications for partnership opportunities (i.e., would a smaller jurisdiction be advised to apply for a partnership later rather than sooner)?
- Are fare revenues factored into direct financial partnerships? The document does not address the role of fare revenues. The TAC recommends that fare revenues be credited 2:1 (the same as the contribution).
- The document does not clearly explain the role of capital improvements. Does the partner pay only for service, only for capital improvements, or both? The TAC recommends that the language be clarified.
- The document does not clearly explain the status of the partnership agreement after five years. If a new route is successful, will Metro eventually take over funding and operation? Or will the operation of such a route always be dependent upon re-negotiation of the partnership agreement? Again, the TAC recommends that the language be clarified, or a supporting example/scenario be included in the document.

Speed and Reliability Partnerships with Local Jurisdictions (Page 2)

- TAC members note that the document defines “speed” improvement criteria, but does not mention “reliability” improvement criteria. The TAC recommends that Metro develop criteria specifically for reliability improvements and include these in the document.
- Proposals in this category will require research. The TAC recommends that any costs to develop the proposal should be borne by the partner, and not by Metro.
- The TAC recommends that the timeline for submitting proposals be clarified. “First come, first served” is not an adequate screening criterion for investments in infrastructure.

Direct Financial Partnership Priorities (Page 5)

- The TAC recommends that “improvements in ridership” (Priority 8) be moved higher on the list, between #2 and #3.
- As a sub-heading under Priority #7, the TAC recommends “service to under-served, low-income communities” be added.
- As a sub-heading under Priority #7, the TAC recommends that “land use changes to increase ridership” be added.
- Priority #6, identifying partners that would like to contribute additional funding, should be moved higher on the list, perhaps between #3 and #4.

Speed and Reliability Priorities (Page 6)

- Priority #2 says that the project must be completed within five years. The TAC recommends the addition of language that gives higher priority to projects that can be completed BEFORE five years, with priority given to those with the shortest implementation time.
- Priority #3 should be moved higher on the list, between #1 and #2.
- Include a new item between #2 and #3, “Increases the volume of buses.”
- As a subheading under #4, TAC recommends the addition of “increases service to under-served low-income communities”
- As a sub-heading under #4, TAC recommends the addition of “land use code changes to increase ridership.”

Once again, the TAC thanks you for your presentation and for the opportunity to provide input to Metro staff on this important document.

Sincerely,

Hans Brandal, Chair
King County Transit Advisory Committee

cc Kevin Desmond, General Manager, Metro Transit Division, King County Department of Transportation (KCDOT)
Betty Gullledge-Bennett, Manager, Community Relations and Communications, KCDOT